

## **GOP Continues Partisan Streak, Brings “Worst Transportation Bill” In Decades to the Floor**

This week, House Republicans are bringing a partisan highway bill to the Floor that destroys jobs, rolls back safety standards and does not meet our country's infrastructure needs. Instead of working with Democrats on bipartisan legislation to rebuild and modernize our infrastructure, House Republicans have continued their ideological streak by hijacking a traditionally bipartisan issue and putting forward a partisan bill that destroys 550,000 American jobs and makes drastic cuts to surface transportation funding.

When Republicans took the majority, they vowed to ensure a transparent process when considering legislation. Unfortunately, they fell short on their promise with this bill – releasing the 846-page text only two days before Committee markup: “Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) asked the panel who had read the bill. Only Chairman John Mica's (R-Fla.) hand went up... Rahall later had a parliamentary inquiry: ‘Am I correct in understanding we are now proceeding to the markup of a bill that nobody has read?’” [Politico, [2/2/12](#)]

A look back at previous bills shows investments in surface transportation have typically enjoyed widespread bipartisan support:

- 1987: The Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act passed the House **401 – 20**.
- 1991: The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act passed **343 – 83**.
- 1998: The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century passed **337 – 80**.
- 2005: Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users passed **417 – 9**.

But the only thing bipartisan about House Republicans' transportation bill is the opposition:

- Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, a former GOP congressman, called the bill “the most partisan” transportation bill in decades: *“This is the most partisan transportation bill that I have ever seen... And it also is the most anti-safety bill I have ever seen. It hollows out our No. 1 priority, which is safety, and frankly, it hollows out the guts of the transportation efforts that we've been about for the last three years... It's the worst transportation bill I've ever seen during 35 years of public service.”* [Politico, [2/2/12](#)]
- Republican Sen. Jim Inhofe said the House GOP's plan on revenues is “not realistic:” *“I think it's not realistic that you can fund any size bill — let alone a six-year bill — with proceeds from increased [energy] production.”* [Politico, [11/9/11](#)]
- And according to his Chief of Staff, Rep. Steve LaTourette also felt the bill was partisan, despite broad support for infrastructure in the past: *“In its current formation there are lots of things we don't like about it. If it's not changed drastically, we're not going to support it... Infrastructure used to be something that was widely popular among both parties, and for some reason over the last few Congresses, they've become highly polarized.”* [Streetsblog, [2/8/12](#)]

House Republicans' highway bill stands in stark contrast to the Senate's bill, which enjoys overwhelmingly bipartisan support. Rather than work together to create jobs and make needed investments in our nation's infrastructure so that we can support the flow of commerce, House Republicans have walked away from the American people once again and continue to waste time on partisan games.